

U.S. National Park Service International Programs Quarterly Bulletin

Welcome to the U.S. National Park Service (NPS) International Programs Quarterly Bulletin, issued by the NPS Office of International Affairs (OIA).

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April - June 2006

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First U.S.-China Sister Park Relationship Established

On May 13th, 2006, Yosemite National Park Superintendent Michael Tollefson established with his Chinese counterpart, Cheng Yingfeng, the first sister park relationship between Chinese and American national parks, between China's Huangshan and American's Yosemite. Each park is a World Heritage site famous for their mountains, valleys, waterfalls and stunning scenery. Both sites have inspired painters, poets, writers, artists and visitors alike for centuries and have imbued each nation with a rich cultural history. Yosemite has also hosted a visit by a delegation from Huangshan and both parks are now working on an action plan for cooperative activities over the next two years. An exchange of existing art exhibits between the parks is likely to be the first cooperative activity. For more information, visit: <http://www.nps.gov/yose/news/2006/huan0515.htm>

World Protected Areas Leadership Forum

Nearly 30 chief executives of protected area management agencies from around the world convened in La Paz, Mexico, May 28-30, 2006 for the 7th annual World Protected Area Leadership Forum (WPALF). NPS Director Mainella represented the U.S. and signed an agreement on sister parks with Mexican counterpart Dr. Ernesto Enkerlin during the Forum meeting. The leaders also backed an NPS proposal to develop a workshop on Public-Private Partnerships and will further discuss the issue of capacity building for protected area agencies at their 2007 meeting. IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) organized the meeting – see http://www.iucn.org/themes/wcpa/ppa/WPALF_Docs.htm for a report on the WPALF. For more information, contact Jon Putnam, at jonathan_putnam@nps.gov

Angkor World Heritage Site Technical Assistance

Fulfilling the U.S. Government's 2005 pledge to lend assistance to existing World Heritage sites, NPS hydrologist Alan Ellsworth joined a multinational team of preservation specialists assembled by the World Monuments Fund (WMF) to undertake a technical assistance mission to Cambodia's most famous attraction, the temple complexes of Angkor. This marked the third time that NPS technical experts participated in a WMF-led mission to this World Heritage site – earlier trips occurred in December 2004 and May 2005. The purpose of this technical assistance mission was to finalize designs for interventions at Angkor Wat and Phnom Bakheng. Ellsworth helped plan and present a workshop on the geotechnical, hydrologic and façade stabilization issues at Phnom Bakheng, which faces degradation from both heavy tourism traffic and rainwater infiltration into the stonework. Upon completion of the workshop and mission, the WMF team reported to APSARA, the Cambodian authority that administers the temple complexes at Angkor. For more information, contact Rudy D'Alessandro at rudy_dalessandro@nps.gov

Gabon Park Managers' U.S. Study Tour

Working with the U.S. Embassy in Libreville, Gabon, and USAID's Congo Basin Forest Partnership, NPS helped arrange a study tour in April 2006 for four Gabonese national park conservateurs (superintendents) – from Birougou, Mayumba, Minkebe-east, and Monts de Cristal national parks. Site visits included **Harpers Ferry National Historic Park**, the **Mather Training Center** and **Harpers Ferry Design Center**; **Big Cypress National Park & Preserve**; **Everglades National Park**; and **Great Smoky Mountains National Park**, and focused on historical, natural resource and recreational elements in the visitor experience; the design of signs, displays, and multimedia presentations; training of park guides to provide interpretation; handling oil and gas claims within park boundaries; marine-coastal park management; park concessionaires; and science-based research to promote ecosystem restoration. This visit also facilitated initial discussion on establishment of sister park relationships between Gabon and U.S. national parks. For more information, contact Rudy D'Alessandro, at rudy_dalessandro@nps.gov

International Volunteers in the Parks Partnership with World Wildlife Fund

OIA welcomed NPS international volunteer, Dixie Makwale to the Washington Office where he gave a presentation about his volunteer program at **Great Smoky Mountains National Park (GRSM)**. Makwale is chief warden at Lilongwe Nature Sanctuary, a unit of Malawi National Parks. He had just finished a six month volunteer program at GRSM. Makwale's training included environmental education, invasive species management, and a variety of natural history subjects relating to GRSM including black bear ecology, forest and stream ecology of the Southern Appalachians, and geology.

Makwale's volunteer training program was coordinated through a unique partnership involving the World Wildlife Fund-Finland (WWF), Malawi National Parks, the NPS, and the Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont. WWF-Finland helped OIA coordinate his volunteer program and financed his transportation to the U.S. Without funding from WWF-Finland, Makwale's program would not have been possible. NPS international volunteer programs typically must be self financed by the participants or by outside organizations, thus individuals from developing countries who could benefit the most are underrepresented in the IVIP Program. These countries contain some of the world's most threatened natural ecosystems; however, their governments have meager resources to protect them. Malawi is one of the poorest nations in Africa and local residents look to its national park resources for shelter and sustenance. Deforestation, poaching, land degradation, water pollution from agricultural runoff and sewage are among the environmental problems Malawi national park managers face. By providing hands on training to foreign park rangers like Makwale, NPS is helping national parks and protected area agencies build internal capacity, develop strategies to confront threats to their resources, and enlist the support of local communities. The benefits are not only one way, however. Besides the eager assistance that international volunteers provide to U.S. parks, NPS gains fresh insights and perspectives as NPS employees view their parks through the eyes of their international colleagues. Each year, **international volunteers provide over \$1 million in saved costs to the NPS**. For more information, contact Linda Bennett, at Linda_bennett@nps.gov

Park Flight Migratory Bird Program Technical Assistance

Protected Areas in Argentina and Grenada Receive Technical Assistance from Park Flight

Jim Bacon, Outdoor Recreation Program Manager at **Yosemite National Park**, provided visitor use and protected area management expertise to Argentina in May for the Park Flight Migratory Bird Program. Jim developed a written plan and recommendations to integrate visitor use and conservation efforts at Punta Rasa Natural Reserve on Samborombon Bay in the state of Buenos Aires. The Punta Rasa area

is an "Internationally Important Wetland" under the Ramsar Convention and is part of a protected area which is used by over 100,000 migratory shorebirds.

Lisa Andrews, Education Specialist at **Big Cypress National Preserve**, provided curriculum development expertise to Grenada National Parks in June for Park Flight. Lisa developed environmental teaching material to be integrated into the school curriculum, specifically a teacher training booklet and a teacher training workshop plan. The focus of the materials is on the importance of the Grenada forest and its diverse species, including migratory birds shared with the U.S. and resident birds

Mexican Biologist Assists Park Flight at Sequoia/Kings Canyon

Humberto Bustos Santana from Mexico participated in a four-month international internship for the Park Flight Migratory Bird Program at **Sequoia/Kings Canyon National Parks**. Humberto attended an Institute for Bird Populations banding training and a park interpretive operations training. He was then teamed up with an NPS biological technician to run MAPS bird banding stations, conducted Breeding Bird Survey routes, and monitored Peregrine Falcons; and with an NPS environmental education specialist provided bilingual interpretive bird walks and campfire programs to the public, presented Mexican community outreach programs in the San Joachin Valley, and gave a presentation to park staff on bird conservation efforts in Mexico. For more information, contact Carol Beidleman at BeidlemanC@aol.com, or (970) 586-3776.

NPS Participates in North American "Trilateral" Conservation Efforts

The NPS is participating in two important initiatives linking conservation efforts in Canada, the United States and Mexico. The NPS is working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Parks Canada, the Canadian Wildlife Service, and Mexico's National Commission for Natural Protected Areas (CONANP) to develop a "Sister Protected Area Network" for the conservation of the monarch butterfly. This network will jointly develop international projects to preserve and restore breeding, migration and winter habitat for the iconic butterfly. For more information, contact Jon Putnam at Jonathan.Putnam@nps.gov (and see the CNN story here: <http://www.cnn.com/2006/TECH/science/07/06/monarch.butterfly.reut/index.html>)

In addition, the NPS is working to help build a network of sister marine protected areas along the Pacific coast of North America. Gary Davis (NPS's Ocean Programs Coordinator), worked with Parks Canada, CONANP, and the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) at Pacific Rim NP, Vancouver Island, BC, June 7-9, to design a marine protected area monitoring program for this network. The proposed U.S. sister parks will include three national parks, five national wildlife refuges, a national marine sanctuary, and an estuarine research reserve in southern California, and four national parks, five national wildlife refuges, three national marine sanctuaries and two estuarine research reserves near Monterey and San Francisco, California. Gary Davis can be contacted at Gary.Davis@nps.gov and at (202-513-7178) or (805-658-5707).

NPS Assists Parks Canada Develop Recreational Activities Assessment Framework

The NPS is assisting Parks Canada as it begins assessing the recreational activities taking place in Canadian national parks, historic sites, marine conservation areas and historic canals. Building on previous work, Parks Canada is working with partners to develop a new Recreational Activities Assessment Framework. Rick Potts, the NPS National Wilderness & Recreation Programs Manager, is providing advice to Parks Canada based on the NPS's own work in this area. For more information, contact Rick at Rick.Potts@nps.gov

This newsletter is distributed quarterly to NPS staff, partners and other interested parties. If you wish to be removed from the distribution list, please contact Rudy D'Alessandro at rudy_dalessandro@nps.gov.